

# **APPENDIX H. COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY PLAN**

## **INTRODUCTION**

The purpose of this communications strategy plan is to help the Comprehensive Study Team effectively communicate with the public and with participating agencies regarding the Sacramento and San Joaquin River Basins Comprehensive Study.

This plan identifies strategies for educating stakeholders and, to a certain extent, the general public about the purpose and need for the Comprehensive Study, its scope and timeframe, and potential measures to be evaluated. The plan also contains strategies and tactics that will allow the Study Team to involve stakeholders in the planning process and to obtain input to the Phase I Documentation Report to be completed in April 1999. While many of these strategies and tactics will remain in effect over the course of the entire project, this plan focuses on Phase I efforts. This plan will be revised as needed.

## **STUDY MISSION STATEMENT**

To develop a system-wide, comprehensive flood management plan for the Central Valley to reduce flood damage and integrate ecosystem restoration.

## **COMMUNICATIONS GOALS**

- Create an environment that fosters specific focused input from stakeholders and interested parties as well as input from the general public.
- Develop an awareness among the general public, stakeholders, opinion leaders, policy makers and other interested parties about the flood damage reduction and related environmental resource issues and problems that are being addressed by the Comprehensive Study.
- Build support among key audiences for the flood damage reduction and related ecosystem restoration measures and eventual alternatives or plans.
- Foster a sense of involvement in the process and investment in the proposed plan among participating agencies.
- Identify potential areas of concerns among stakeholders and policy makers early in the process so that appropriate steps can be taken to reduce those concerns to the extent possible prior to completion of the final Comprehensive Study Report.

## STRATEGIC APPROACH

The general strategic approach to meeting the public involvement goals include:

- Communicate with the public through a focused news media effort;
- Concentrate general public outreach efforts on organizations and geographic regions most likely to be interested in the subject;
- Position the Comprehensive Study as a positive example of inclusive, multi-objective flood management planning;
- Establish a method for regular communications with and among stakeholder organizations;
- Develop and maintain communication links with outside organizations and agencies;
- Conduct stakeholder meetings for specific stakeholder groups to engage them in the process;
- Work to ensure these parties are informed of the process prior to major news coverage.

## IMAGE AND MESSAGES

The image and messages of the Comprehensive Study are the foundation upon which all communication tactics are based. Success in communicating these messages and developing this image depends on repetition and consistency.

The Comprehensive Study addresses two problem areas: flood damage reduction and ecosystem restoration. While specific messages will be directed to specific target audiences, the following core messages will serve as a basis for all communications:

- ***A Comprehensive Flood Damage Reduction Plan is Necessary for the Central Valley.***

The potential for flood damages is great, with billions of dollars of property, homes and businesses, and hundreds of thousands of lives at stake.

The current flood control system may not provide the desired levels of protection.

California's trillion-dollar economy is ultimately at risk if the State is unable to provide a significant level of flood protection to the major urban areas and adequate flood protection to the agricultural areas within the state.

● ***Flood Damage Reduction Measures Must Be Developed in an Environmentally Acceptable Manner.***

The Central Valley has been the focus of competing interests -- economic, environmental, urban, and agricultural. Planning for flood damage reduction has been impeded by disagreement among competing interests. There is a need for more than only structural approaches to flood issues on the local and sub-regional levels.

Integration of flood damage reduction and ecosystem restoration require the use of both traditional structural approaches and less traditional nonstructural approaches.

## **GEOGRAPHIC TARGETS**

The following counties make up the study area:

San Joaquin	Glenn	Amador	Madera
Sutter	Butte	Yolo	Fresno
Shasta	Lake	Sacramento	Mariposa
Tehama	Colusa	Stanislaus	Tuolumne
Yuba	Placer	Merced	Calaveras

## **PHASE I ACTIVITIES**

Listed below are the specific activities that will allow the Study Team to meet its communications goals. An implementation timeline follows.

### **Stakeholder Outreach**

**Purpose.** To make stakeholders aware of the Comprehensive Study planning process and encourage their involvement.

**Desired Results.** Participation by stakeholders in the planning process and input from stakeholders on the Final Comprehensive Study Report to Congress.

### **Tactics.**

**Database.** Develop database of potential stakeholders and interested parties. Establish geographic and interest-specific codes so that targeted distribution of materials is possible. Update as needed to ensure accuracy and completeness.

**Newsletter.** Produce and distribute a quarterly update letter to all stakeholders. Include background information on the Comprehensive Study, progress reports and upcoming milestones and public involvement opportunities. Format will be 11x17, folded, two-color.

**Stakeholder Interviews.** As needed, the Study Team or a consultant will interview stakeholders to obtain information similar to that previously obtained for the Sacramento River basin during a related study.

**Focus Groups.** Hold focus groups with targeted stakeholders from each basin to identify issues, opportunities, and concerns.

**Regional Research Discussions.** The Study Team, assisted by consultants, will conduct focused small group discussions with the most-interested stakeholders (reclamation districts, farming interests, environmental groups in each study area) to identify issues of concern and potential measures. Targeted locations include:

Marysville/Yuba City	Chico
Colusa	Fresno or Firebaugh
Sacramento	Modesto

The format will include a general overview, status report, and milestone schedule of the Comprehensive Study followed by Question and Answer session (Q&A). These meetings are intended for focused discussion among stakeholders. DWR Public Information staff will work with district offices to secure sites and to determine participation. Consultants will coordinate and provide guidance to the Comprehensive Study Team on recommended participants. Consultants will work with the Study Team and Public Information staff from DWR and from the Corps to draft and distribute agendas and notices as well as to prepare members of the Study Team participating in each workshop.

**Regional Public Workshops.** In Phase II, conduct regional public workshops for stakeholders and interested parties immediately following release of the Phase I Documentation Report. Target locations include:

Red Bluff	Marysville/Yuba City
Williams or Willows	Fresno
Sacramento	Los Banos or Firebaugh
Modesto	

Publicize meetings through agency and stakeholder Public information offices (PIO), news releases to area media, targeted mailings, and articles in stakeholder publications. The format will include a general overview of the Comprehensive Study followed by Q&A. A one-hour open house segment will precede each meeting, offering a chance for interested members of the

public to talk informally with members of the Study Team. Issues raised during the Q&A will be charted and documented so they can be addressed in the Study Final Report.

**Website.** Update Comprehensive Study website monthly to keep stakeholders informed of key study developments or public involvement meetings. Include mechanism for receiving input.

**Agency PIO Coordination.** Utilize public information staff and volunteers from stakeholder organizations to implement local public involvement activities. Identify potential participants in the Comprehensive Study speakers bureau. Provide Study materials (fact sheets, brochure, maps) for distribution by these agencies and groups. Work with these groups to alert their respective constituencies of upcoming public workshops.

### **Informational Materials**

**Purpose.** These materials will provide factual, comprehensible information about the Comprehensive Study for stakeholders and interested parties to allow their participation in the planning process. This information will also assist the public in differentiating the Comprehensive Study from other planning efforts.

**Desired Results.** Accurate news stories and informed stakeholders.

### **Tactics.**

**Graphic Identity.** Develop graphic format for all Comprehensive Study materials. This format will be easy to differentiate from other projects and identities, and will communicate the purpose of the Comprehensive Study. A template for project fact sheets provide a professional look and the flexibility to keep information current. Consultants will provide the Comprehensive Study Team with electronic copies of this information.

**General Brochure.** Develop a general brochure that provides a quick overview of the Comprehensive Study and includes the key messages. Format is 8 ½ x 11, folded, four pages, two-color. Potential sections include:

- What is the Study and How Did it Originate?
- The Process (Multi-Government Participation and Public Involvement)
- Study Area
- Timeline
- Future Steps (what happens after the Final Report to Congress)
- Participating Agencies (Executive Committee)

- How to Get Involved
- Costs

**Fact Sheets.** Develop two-page (one page, double-sided) fact sheets on the following topics. Similar look as brochure, but with more detailed information and the ability to update. Other topics may be added as needs arise:

- Comprehensive Study Backgrounder
- History of Flood Management
- Environmental Issues
- Study Timeline
- Array of Potential Measures

**Commonly Asked Questions.** Develop “Commonly Asked Questions” with a similar look as the fact sheets, to be available on the Website, and for handouts and the information kit. Potential questions include (additional questions can be added as the need arises):

- What is the purpose of the Comprehensive Study?
- Who is involved?
- What is the Study area?
- When will it be completed?
- What is the difference between this study and other efforts like CALFED?
- What is the cost to develop and implement?
- Is this the first time a study of this type has been undertaken?
- What kinds of measures will the plan contain?
- Will private land be condemned as part of the plan?
- How can anyone get involved?

**Maps and Other Visuals.** The Comprehensive Study Team will produce maps of the study area and visual images of the timeline, process, potential measures, or other graphic information. These maps will be available in 8 and 1/2 X 11 format for the information kit, and on poster boards for use at meetings.

**PowerPoint Presentation.** Develop a 15-minute PowerPoint presentation for use at public meetings and workshops. Have slides and overheads available in addition to the digital format. Prepare a handout for the audience based on the presentation.

**Executive Summary.** The Comprehensive Study Team will produce an Executive Summary of the Phase I Documentation Report. The information will be concise and understandable to the layperson.

**Briefing Packets.** Produce summarized information packets for use during meetings with policy makers in California and in Washington, D.C.

**Video and B-roll.** In Phase II, develop six-minute video about the Comprehensive Study for use at presentations. Work with DWR to obtain existing b-roll footage of recent flood events, repairs, and ecosystem restoration activities. Make available to local television producers planning stories about the Comprehensive Study.

## Media Relations

**Purpose.** To utilize the news media to raise public awareness about the flood damage reduction issues and to communicate information about the Comprehensive Study to interested parties and to the general public.

**Desired Results.** Public awareness of opportunities to participate in the Comprehensive Study process through promotion of workshops, meetings, and other events. Another optimal result is general awareness among decision makers of the issues and measures being analyzed.

## Presentations

**Purpose.** To inform stakeholders and the general public about the Comprehensive Study by making presentations to targeted civic, business, and special interest groups.

**Desired Results.** Targeted publics become involved in the Comprehensive Study by participating in public meetings, providing comments on the environmental documents, and by sharing information with their communities.

## Tactics.

**PowerPoint Presentation.** See above paragraph, "Informational Materials," under Phase I Activities.

**Resource Manual.** The Comprehensive Study Team will prepare a speaker's manual with tips for effective public speaking; copies of the presentation on disc and in slide and overhead format; a presentation outline; script; commonly asked questions; audience evaluation form; sample follow-up letter; and sample distribution materials.

**Recruit Presenters.** The Comprehensive Study Team will identify volunteer presenters and work with presenters as needed to review presentation skills and key messages.

**Identify Opportunities.** Identify and schedule speaking engagements for the Comprehensive Study and coordinate schedules with presenters.

## **EIS/EIR Public Involvement Opportunities - Phase II**

**Purpose.** To engage the public in the planning process including development of the environmental documents.

**Desired Results.** Public participation in the Comprehensive Study public meetings, workshops and events by a diverse cross section of interests.

### **Tactics.**

**Scoping Meetings.** Hold scoping meetings in each basin (number to be determined). Ensure database lists are complete and updated to ensure adequate notice. Consider purchasing display advertisements in local newspapers. Work with stakeholder groups to assist in public notices. Distribute news releases and public service announcements to promote awareness of upcoming meetings. Format meetings to include opportunity for questions and answers. Consider including a hearing officer or facilitator.

**Public Meetings.** Conduct public meetings in key areas throughout the Comprehensive Study area in advance of the release of the draft EIS/EIR to alert stakeholders of the major issues addressed in these documents and to give them an opportunity to ask questions prior to the public comment period.

**Public Hearings.** Conduct public hearings in key areas throughout each Comprehensive Study area. Ensure database lists are complete and updated to ensure adequate public notice. Consider purchasing display advertisements in local newspapers. Work with stakeholder groups to assist in public notice. Distribute news releases and public service announcements to promote awareness of upcoming meetings. Format meetings to include opportunity for questions and answers. A facilitator will be included.

**Meeting Support Materials.** Prepare informational materials, displays, news releases and advertisements to support the public meetings and hearings. Secure meeting record keeper.

**Other.** Other public involvement tactics will be developed when this phase of the Comprehensive Study begins.



***Other.***

***Communications Team Meetings.*** Meet with members of the Study Team, consultants, and public information representatives from DWR and Corps as needed to review strategy and to coordinate activities.

***Executive Committee Updates.*** Representatives of the Study Team will provide regular updates to the Executive Committee on the status of public involvement activities.